

Whereas Russian military forces continue to commit brutal atrocities against the civilian population in Chechnya and have been implicated in abductions of Chechen civilians who filed cases before the European Court of Human Rights;

Whereas leaders of the Group of 7 nations have repeatedly expressed that a military solution in Chechnya is not possible;

Whereas in the aftermath of the tragic siege of School No. 1 in Beslan, Russia that occurred during September 2004, which was an act of terrorism abhorrent to all civilized people, President Putin cited violence in the North Caucasus as a pretext for consolidating centralized power and proposed to abolish the popular election of regional governors in favor of presidential appointment of such officials;

Whereas the catastrophic consequences of the siege of School No. 1 in Beslan and of the continued violence in Chechnya demonstrate the need to search for political solutions and to commence negotiations between the Government of Russia and moderate Chechen separatists, giving moderates credence over extremist elements;

Whereas the Government of Russia initially supported the undemocratic results of the November 21, 2004, runoff in the Ukrainian presidential election, in spite of widespread election fraud and mass demonstrations in support of a new, legitimate election, which raised concerns among the Group of 7 nations that the commitment of the Government of Russia to democratic standards is waning;

Whereas a wide range of observers at think tanks and nongovernmental organizations have expressed deep concern that the Russian Federation is moving away from the political and legal underpinnings of a market economy and have identified the continuing war in Chechnya as a major threat to stability and democracy in Russia; and

Whereas the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations, including the opportunity for the Russian Government to host the Group of 8 nations in 2006 as planned, is a privilege that is premised on the Government of Russia voluntarily accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of democracy, including governmental accountability, transparency, and the rule of law: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the selective prosecution of political opponents and the suppression of free media by the Russian Federation, and the continued commission of widespread atrocities in the conduct of the brutal war in Chechnya, do not reflect the minimum standards of democratic governance and rule of law that characterize every other member state in the Group of 8 nations;

(2) the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations, including the opportunity for the Russian Government to host the Group of 8 nations summit in 2006 as planned, should be conditioned on the Russian Government accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of free, democratic societies as generally practiced by every other member nation of the Group of 8 nations, including—

(A) the rule of law, including protection from selective prosecution and protection from arbitrary state-directed violence;

(B) a court system free of political influence and manipulation;

(C) a free and independent media;

(D) a political system open to participation by all citizens and which protects freedom of expression and association; and

(E) the protection of universally recognized human rights; and

(3) the President and the Secretary of State should work with the other members of the Group of 7 nations to take all necessary steps to suspend the participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations until the President, after consultation with the other members of the Group of 7 nations, determines and reports to Congress that the Russian Government is committed to respecting and upholding the democratic principles described in paragraph (2).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 17, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2006 and future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to consider the nomination of Daniel R. Levinson, to be Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC; Harold Damelin, to be Inspector General, Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC; and Raymond Wagner, Jr., to be a Member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board, Washington, DC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, 2004, at 9:30 a.m. to hold a hearing on Russia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 10 a.m., in SD-430.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a markup on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., in Senate Dirksen Office Building Room 226.

I. Legislation: S. 256, A bill to Amend Title 11 of the United States Code, and for Other Purposes Act of 2005, [Grassley, Hatch, Sessions]

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate for a hearing entitled, "The President's Fiscal Year 2006 Budget Request for the SBA" on Thursday, February 17, 2005, beginning at 10 a.m., in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 17, 2005, at 2:30 p.m., to hold a closed hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on National Parks be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, at 2:30 p.m. to review the National Park Service's implementation of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act authorized in Public Law 108-447.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, THE FEDERAL WORK FORCE, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia be authorized to meet on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 10 a.m. for a hearing entitled, "Programs in Peril: An Overview of the GAO High-Risk List."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 256

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, February 28, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 256, the bankruptcy reform bill, provided that consideration of the bill during Monday's session be for the purpose of debate only.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURR). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of H.

Con. Res. 66, the adjournment resolution; provided that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 66) was agreed to, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 66

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Thursday, February 17, 2005, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2005, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on Thursday, February 17, 2005, or Friday, February 18, 2005, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, February 28, 2005, or at such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House and the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate whenever, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations on the calendar: All nominations reported by the Armed Services Committee today.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

NOMINATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Buddie J. Penn, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brigadier General Mark W. Anderson, 0000
Brigadier General John H. Bordelon, Jr., 0000
Brigadier General Thomas L. Carter, 0000
Brigadier General Howard A. McMahan, 0000
Brigadier General James M. Sluder, III, 0000
Brigadier General Martin M. Mazick, 0000
Brigadier General Thomas A. Dyches, 0000

To be brigadier general

Colonel Roger A. Binder, 0000

Colonel David L. Commons, 0000
Colonel James L. Melin, 0000
Colonel Brian P. Meenan, 0000
Colonel Mike H. McClendon, 0000
Colonel James F. Jackson, 0000
Colonel Kevin F. Henabray, 0000
Colonel Elizabeth A. Grote, 0000
Colonel Michael C. Dudzik, 0000
Colonel Bruce E. Davis, 0000
Colonel Thomas R. Coon, 0000
Colonel Carl M. Skinner, 0000
Colonel Michael B. Newton, 0000
Colonel Robert L. Chu, 0000

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry, 0000

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brigadier General Thomas A. Benes, 0000
Brigadier General William D. Catto, 0000
Brigadier General Walter E. Gaskin, Sr., 0000
Brigadier General Timothy R. Larsen, 0000
Brigadier General Michael E. Ennis, 0000
Brigadier General Michael R. Lehnert, 0000
Brigadier General George J. Trautman, III, 0000
Brigadier General Richard C. Zilmer, 0000
Brigadier General Willie J. Williams, 0000
Brigadier General Duane D. Thiessen, 0000

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Colonel George J. Allen, 0000
Colonel Raymond C. Fox, 0000
Colonel Anthony M. Haslam, 0000
Colonel David R. Heinz, 0000
Colonel Steven A. Hummer, 0000
Colonel Anthony L. Jackson, 0000
Colonel Richard M. Lake, 0000
Colonel Robert E. Milstead, Jr., 0000
Colonel Michael R. Regner, 0000
Colonel David G. Reist, 0000
Colonel Melvin G. Spiese, 0000
Colonel John E. Wissler, 0000

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Adm. William J. Fallon, 0000

The following named officer for appointment as Vice Chief of Naval Operations, United States Navy, and appointment to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., sections 601 and 5035:

To be admiral

Vice Adm. Robert F. Willard, 0000

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Adm. John B. Nathman, 0000

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Terrance T. Etnyre, 0000

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN51 AIR FORCE nomination of Thomas S. Hoffman, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN52 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning HERBERT L. ALLEN JR., and ending DALE A. JACKMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN53 AIR FORCE nomination of Leslie G. Macrae, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN54 AIR FORCE nomination of Omar Billigie, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN55 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning Corbert K. Ellison, and ending Gisella Y. Velez, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN56 AIR FORCE nomination of Gretchen M. Adams, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN57 AIR FORCE nomination of Michael D. Shirley Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN58 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning GERALD J. HUERTA, and ending ANTHONY T. WILSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN59 AIR FORCE nomination of Michael F. Lamb, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN60 AIR FORCE nominations (11) beginning DEAN J. CUTILLAR, and ending AN ZHU, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 6, 2005.

PN129 AIR FORCE nomination of James D. Shaffer, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 31, 2005.

PN130 AIR FORCE nominations (207) beginning THOMAS WILLIAM ACTON, and ending DEBRA S. ZELENACK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 31, 2005.

PN141 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning BARBARA S. BLACK, and ending VINCENT T. JONES, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 8, 2005.

PN142 AIR FORCE nomination of Glenn T. Lunsford, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 8, 2005.

PN143 AIR FORCE nomination of Frederick E. Jackson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 8, 2005.

PN144 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning ROBERT G. PATE, and ending DWAYNE A. STICH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 8, 2005.

PN145 AIR FORCE nomination of Kelly E. Nation, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 8, 2005.

PN146 AIR FORCE nominations (7) beginning LOURDES J. ALMONTE, and ending ROBERT J. WEISENBERGER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 8, 2005.

PN147 AIR FORCE nominations (128) beginning BRIAN F. * AGEE, and ending LUN S.